

TPB spotlight

E - B U L L E T I N

Tourism Promotions Board Philippines

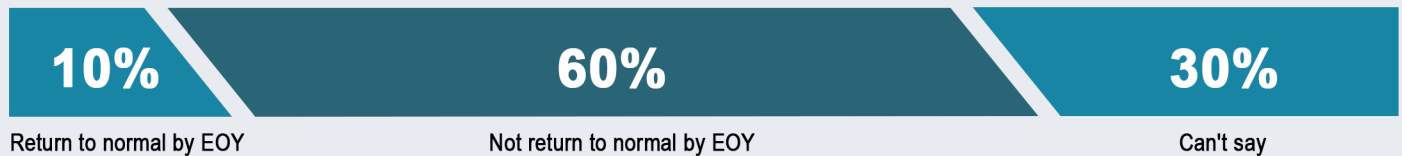
APRIL 2021

PHILIPPINE TOURISM: AN OUTLOOK ON ITS ROAD TO RECOVERY

2020 was a tough year for the global tourism industry with Covid-19 wreaking havoc across the globe. In the Philippines, the Department of Tourism (DOT) responded quickly to mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic to tourism-related businesses. High on its priority list was putting together the Tourism Response and Recovery Plan (TRRP) to tide the industry and its constituents to the new normal. Months down the line, how are the government's recovery plans being taken by tourism stakeholders?

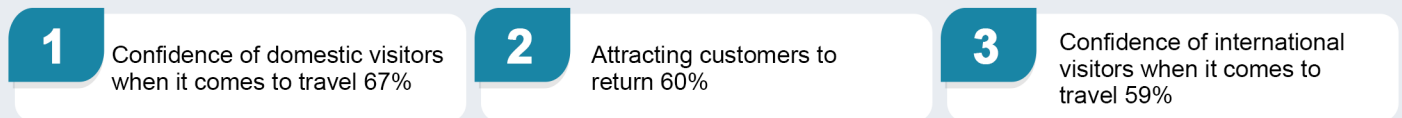
The insights below, gleaned from the January 2021 report of the Philippine Survey and Research Center's (PSRC) stakeholder study, which is composed of three parts -- Mitigation, Recovery and New Normal --, focus on the recovery phase of Philippine travel and tourism during and beyond covid-19. The research study, conducted from October 20 to December 23, 2020, attempted to gauge the current concerns and needs of stakeholders, the familiarity with and satisfaction toward government initiatives, and reactions to possible future activities and suggestions.

End of 2020 Outlook

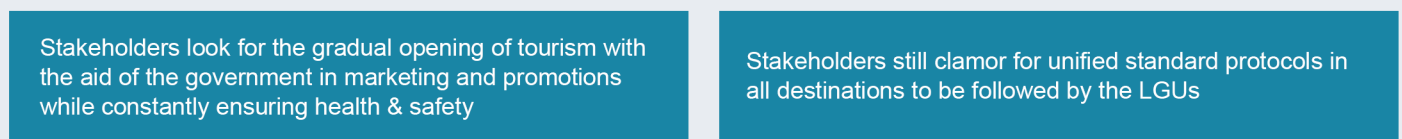


**Outlook has remained the same with the general expectation that we will not return to normal by the end of 2020*

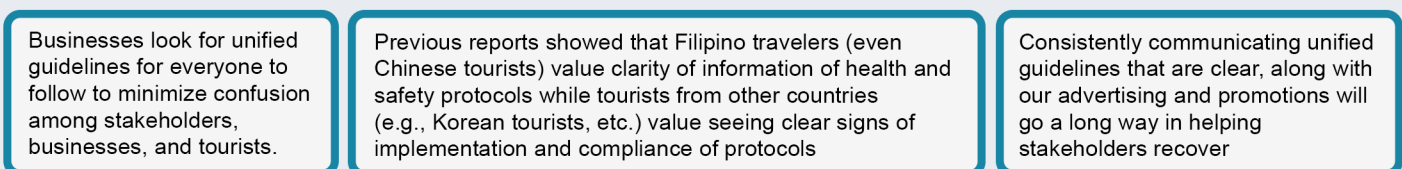
Top issues in terms of priority that need to be addressed remain largely the same - how to attract and boost travel confidence?



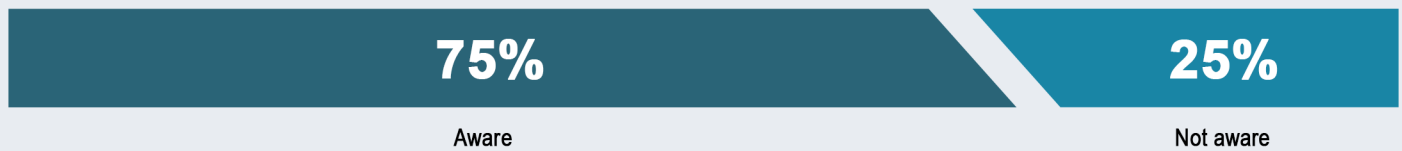
The study consistently yields spontaneous mention of assistance on challenges for the rest of 2020:



Transparency, clarity, and consistency of message:

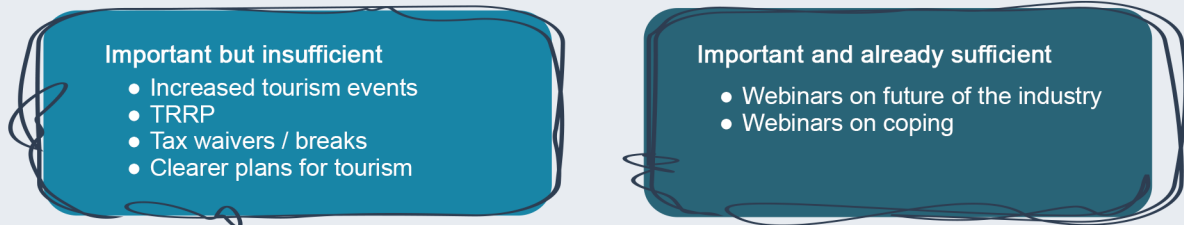


Awareness towards tourism activities



Majority are aware that there are on-going tourism-related activities and programs being done in their area and most of the awareness comes from various information related activities such as training and webinars from different government units.

Top Initiatives



Moving further into recovery, stakeholders start to look more and more for active assistance to help ease the burden of operating. While the information was deemed most critical early in the pandemic (mitigation phase), recovery now puts greater importance on TRRP and boosting tourist confidence.

Awareness on Initiatives	Important	Aware
Tourism Response and Recovery Program (TRRP)	80%	53%
Industry-wide measures that will help restore tourist confidence	66%	37%
Marketing and support materials to promote Philippine tourism	55%	43%
Coordinated and strong mitigated and recovery plans	55%	32%

Source of Information/Awareness



Social networking sites work as the main source of awareness, but other communication channels need to be strengthened as well.

Learnings so far

- As the road to recovery continues, there's a shift towards initiatives that are more proactively geared towards recovery (high benefit) such as:
 - Tourism Response and Recovery Program (TRRP)
 - Industry-wide measures/ plans that help restore tourist confidence
 - Strong tourism marketing support from the government
- Low awareness and availment of top initiatives
- Constant need for unified, clear, and consistent information
- Need to utilize multiple communication channels (not just online) to improve awareness and reach a wider population of stakeholder beneficiaries

Road to Recovery

- The list of needs required to recover are many:
- Financial aid / Tourism Response and Recovery Program (TRRP)
 - Restoration of tourist confidence in visiting PH
 - Proper coordination of tourism recovery plans
 - Consistent marketing & support from govt.
 - Unified and accessible information / protocols
 - Unified and accessible initiatives



KEEP THE FEELINGS "MORE FUN" IN JAPAN



It's a fact that the Japanese love visiting the Philippines. Apart from year-round tropical weather, the country's diverse offerings that cater to almost any form of leisure from relaxation to adventure have always caught the attention of the Japanese market as proven by the steady rise in Japanese tourist arrivals annually. But with the ongoing pandemic, how will the Philippines continue to position itself as one of the preferred destinations for the Japanese?

The Department of Tourism (DOT) in Japan, led by Tourism Attaché Mr. Niel Ballesteros in Tokyo and Officer-in-Charge Mr. Diosel Lubrin in Osaka, is well aware of the current challenges, yet, the unwavering determination to keep the Philippines a top-of-mind destination in the Land of the Rising Sun remains.

Recently, the DOT organized the Marine Diving Fair, a hybrid event that allowed Japanese consumers to visit the DOT Philippine dive booth and Philippine

dive operators and travel agents to conduct B2B transactions online. The Philippine Business Mission in October and the Tourism Expo Japan (TEJ) in November will also push through to continuously provide an online platform for Philippine tourism operators to offer their services to the Japanese market.

And because the fun never stops, the DOT will mount online activities from cooking demos with "Eats More Fun in the Philippines" to virtual tours of Philippine mountains and surf spots. Japanese tourism front liners will also be given the opportunity to become full-fledged experts of Philippine tourism products and services through "Philippine Meister", an online educational program that will offer educational videos that come with an online exam.

To know more about DOT Japan's efforts, visit: <https://philippinetravel.jp/>

TPB Weekly Members' Chat Provides International and Local market updates for Tourism Stakeholders



The Weekly Members' Chat of the Tourism Promotions Board provided foreign and domestic representatives of the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the MICE private sector the opportunity to share market updates and insights to the members and stakeholders of the local tourism industry

DOT Tourism Attachés Mr. Francisco Lardizabal of New York, Ms. Soleil Tropicales of San Francisco, and Mr. Richmond Jimenez of Los Angeles gave a comprehensive presentation on the COVID-19 situation, mitigation measures and protocols, and travel sentiments of the United States and Canadian markets. Local DOT Regional Directors, on the other hand, shared destination updates, the list of reopened tourism spots, and the best practices to mitigate the spread of the virus during tourism-related activities.

Ms. Karina Tiopes of DOT Region VIII also took the opportunity to relay some of the events happening in Eastern Samar that coincide with the 500th Anniversary of the Philippines' participation in the First Circumnavigation of the World, while DOT National Capital Region Director Mr. Woodrow Maquiling, Jr. presented the Department's COVID-19 response programs for affected tourism stakeholders such as assistance to stranded tourists, repurposing hotels as quarantine facilities for positive patients, and providing virtual learning opportunities.

Meanwhile, Intramuros Administrator and Chairperson of the DOT Task Force on Domestic Tourism Product Development Atty. Guiller Asido illustrated the carefully crafted Circulation Plans for people mobility that will be implemented in various attractions of Intramuros such as the Fort Santiago and Baluarte de San Diego to ensure visitor compliance to physical and safety protocols. And to represent the private sector, the platform was given to Philippine Exhibitions and Trade Corporation (PETCO) President Ms. Marisa Nallana who narrated how the MICE industry continuously deals with the effects of the pandemic.

“ We are in the same storm but in different boats. Whether you're in the MICE sector, hotel travel agencies, we're all in this together and there's no other way to beat this but work together. ”

Mr. Woodrow Maquiling,
DOT NCR Director



“ At the end of the day, the name of the game is collaboration. Because organizing virtual events is expensive if you want the best, and if the client wants the best. And for you to deliver the best without having to spend, we have to collaborate. ”

Ms. Marisa Nallana President,
PETCO



“ In terms of promoting and marketing the Philippines, [it] would be engaging mainstream social media influencers of Filipino descent to help spread the good news that the Philippines is a safe and fun destination for travelers. ”

Ms. Soleil Tropicales,
DOT Tourism Attaché for San Francisco



“ It is a hard trail right now but it is doable. Enticing travellers to come to the Philippines is not difficult. As a matter of fact, Philippine consulates all over the US have been having a hard time accommodating appointments of people wanting to get dual citizenship passports alone. People are really wanting to go, aspirations to come to the country are increasing. But we have to do it slowly and safely. ”

Mr. Richmond Jimenez,
DOT Tourism Attaché Los Angeles



“ What we are doing basically is trying to address, trying to adapt and meet the requirements of the current public health situation. So, today we do acknowledge again that there is a threat. And this is a continuing aspect that we want to highlight, but there are ways of really living with the virus and trying to ensure that we will be able to offer the services and the facilities of the district (Intramuros) to all those who would like to visit us. ”

Atty. Guiller Asido,
Intramuros Administrator and
Chairperson of the DOT Task Force on
Domestic Tourism Product Development



GREEN IS IN!

(Ecotourism spots and activities in the Philippines)

HAVE A
SAFE TRIP,
PINAS

The recently celebrated Earth Day reminds us all to put efforts into environmental protection, amplify awareness, and heed the call to protect our only home. So when planning for a vacation, the best choice is to go green.

Going on a “greener vacation” is more than just visiting eco-friendly destinations, directly helping the underprivileged segments of a community, or being more conscious about nature preservation; sustainable or green tourism is also ideal to the “new normal” as it caters to fewer tourists or smaller groups and allows for customized assistance.

HERE ARE SOME DESTINATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES FOR THE GREEN LOVER:



EXTREME BOAT RIDE IN ULOT RIVER, PARAMAS, SAMAR

Being the longest river in Samar, Ulot River offers an exhilarating experience amidst the vastness of the green jungle. Hop on a torpedo boat ride of your life.



VIEW OF THE GIANTS IN MASUNGI GEORESERVE BARAS, RIZAL

Adventure trail and limestones? Masungi Georeserve is an award-winning conservation area and a rustic rock garden within the rainforest of Rizal. It is the place to be when you want to get some inner peace or experience a dense trail adventure overlooking towering lush green trees.



HEAR THE SYMPHONY OF BIRDS WHILE CRUISING ALONG BOJO RIVER IN ALDGUINSAN, CEBU

Run by the Bojo Aloguinsan Ecotourism Association, Bojo River is not only filled with mangroves and flora, it's also home to numerous species of birds. This cruise is one educational tour full of life and discovery.



TAKE A SERENE BREATHE IN SABTANG ISLAND IN BATANES

Make your heart flutter in an instant as you marvel at the panoramic view of the mysterious sea and mountains or immerse yourself in the artistic and cultural traditions of the Ivatan people.



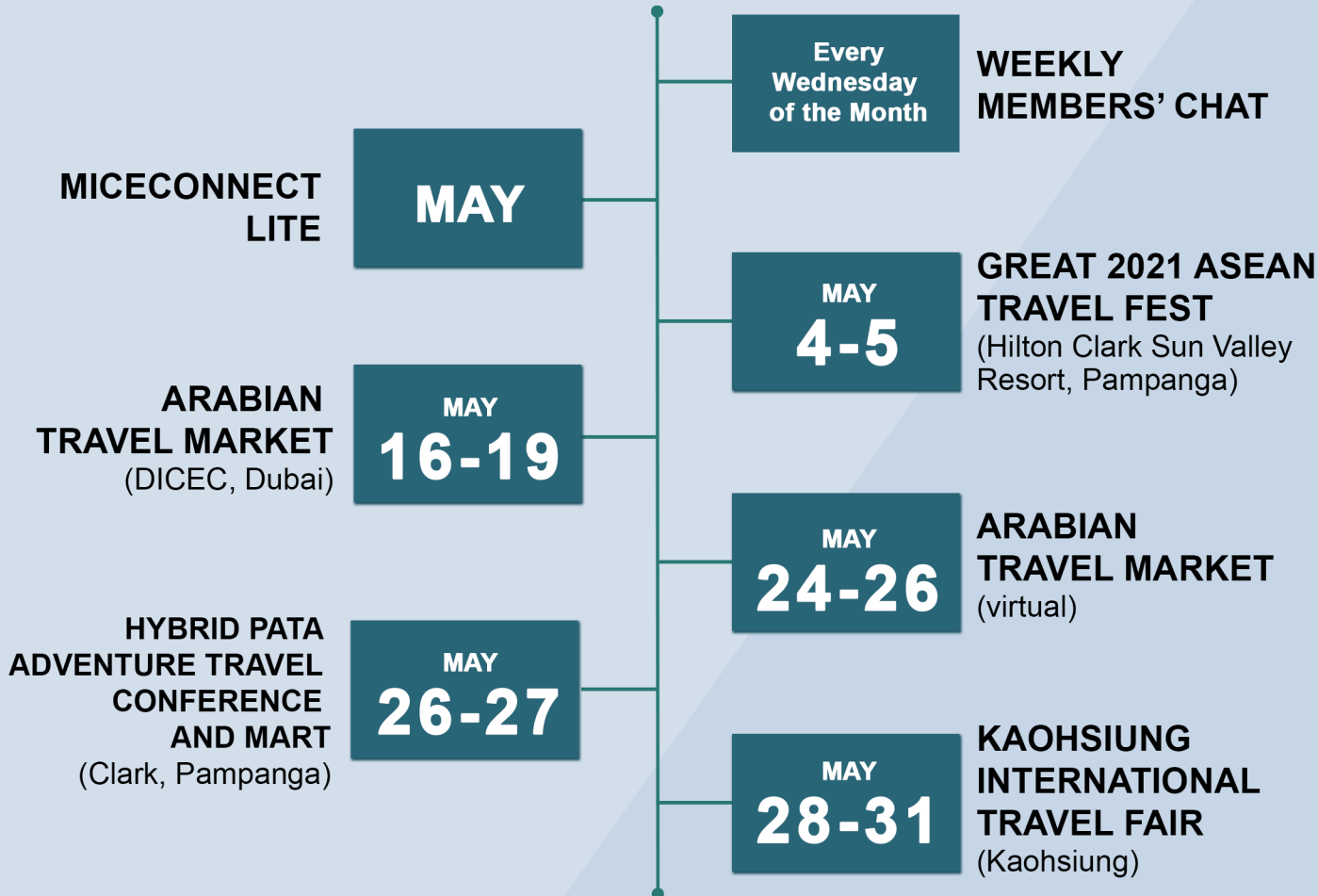
LAKE SEBU, SOUTH COTABATO

Aside from being the ancestral zone for the T’boli tribe whose culture is abundantly inspired by nature, Lake Sebu also offers breathtaking waterfalls surrounded by green, mystic forests that revitalize the mind and soul.

Ecotourism has yet to be fully embraced by most travelers, however, we should bear in mind that sustainable R&R (Rest&Relaxation) benefits the wellbeing of our environment, preserves natural resources, and promotes local stewardship of communities, making it advantageous to humankind and a learning experience above all.

*Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 2021

UPCOMING EVENTS MAY 2021



DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
philippines.travel/safetrip

PHL DOT NOMINATED AT ASIA EDITION OF 2021 WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat enjoins travelers and tourism stakeholders alike to support the Philippines, the Department of Tourism (DOT), and the destinations of Intramuros and Cebu, which have secured nominations at the Asia edition of the 2021 World Travel Awards (WTA). Voting period for the Asian category will be from March 30 to August 16, 2021 on the WTA's portal.

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
philippines.travel/safetrip

BIATF APPROVES SALIVA TESTING FOR BORACAY TOURISTS

The Department of Tourism (DOT) welcomes the approval of the saliva RTPCR test as an alternative to the nasopharyngeal swab RTPCR as one of the entry requirements to the island.